

WHERE IN SIERRA NEVADA IS JIM?

Jim Branham, SNC Executive Officer, is in the field meeting with the partners of the SNC, here are a few of his most recent trips.

Jim met with the Sierra County Board of Supervisors on July 25 to discuss how SNC might carry out its mission in that County. The Supervisors expressed concern about land being removed from the tax roll, given that the county is mostly owned by the public. They also expressed concern about meeting basic infrastructure needs and their ability to compete for grants dollars. A good discussion ensued relative to the role the SNC might play in assisting the County in that regard.



Jim Branham and Assemblyman Tim Leslie during his visit to our office in June 2006.

Branham also met with Doug Mosebar (President of the California Farm Bureau Federation) and northern Sierra Field Representative Ned Coe on August 3. The Farm Bureau had strongly opposed creation of the SNC. Mosebar indicated that the Farm Bureau was interested in engaging with the SNC and the possibility of creating an informal agricultural advisory committee was discussed. Branham will follow up with Coe on next steps. All in all, a positive discussion.

Jim spoke at the Annual Meeting of the Sierra Nevada Alliance August 11-13, giving opening comments and participating as a panelist in the SNC workshop. The event was well attended and many positive comments were received relative to the Strategic Plan and the process used in developing it. Bob Kingman, Eileen Pope and John Knott also attended.

A meeting of governmental partners was held in Auburn on August 13. USFS, NPS, BLM, NRCS, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Water Resources, Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Conservation Board, California Conservation Board and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board were represented. The SNC Action Plan was reviewed and a number of specific issues were discussed. The SNC and its partners will continue to identify opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

AB 84 (Leslie)

This bill has been approved by both the Senate and Assembly. The enrolled bill report was sent to Governor Schwarzenegger last week for approval.

STAFF REPORTS

Bob Kingman has been representing the Conservancy as a committee member reviewing grant applications submitted to Resources Agency for Proposition 50 Sierra Nevada Cascade Grants. This grant cycle is specifically to acquire fee title or conservation easements to protect water quality on properties throughout the Sierra Nevada Region. The committee will complete 19 site visits before recommending grants totaling approximately \$27 million. The committee anticipates making its recommendations to fund selected acquisitions to Secretary Chrisman in early September.

Kingman has been overseeing the initial "field testing" of a recently created planning-document database for use on the Conservancy website.

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A farm in Eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains, by Steve Hoffmann.

STAFF REPORTS CONTINUED...

Minor updates in data and query fields are being made. The database is expected to be available for public use by August 28.

The Conservancy currently took possession of a well-maintained collection of documents compiled over several years by the Sierra Economic Development District. The collection is completely catalogued and will be a good resource for interested parties throughout the region. Kingman has been meeting with the Placer County Library Administrator, who has agreed to house and maintain the collection and an anticipated growing Sierra Nevada Library, and help make the collection available for use region wide through existing public library systems.

Ken Jones, John Knott and Kingman are developing proposed criteria for the selection of Conservancy satellite office locations. Staff will present a recommendation to the Board in October for direction on criteria and a process for selection of locations.

Good things take time Work on the Modoc Line

Jim Branham and John Knott have been working to assist the local efforts of Lassen, Modoc Counties and the Bureau of Land Management to secure the Union Pacific's abandoned Modoc Rail line for public purposes. Completion of this project would preserve the linear integrity of the corridor and provide environmental and economic benefits for the area. Since being made aware of the project at our Alturas Strategic Planning workshop, SNC has been actively involved in bringing a number of supporting players to the table. The list of interested parties that we have discussed this project with include: Union Pacific Railroad, American Land Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Board, Department of Fish and Game, Department of General Services, Lassen Land Trails Trust, and the Resource Legacy Fund. The current focus is on securing an appraisal of the line in order to facilitate acquisition.

SNC BOARD ACTIVITIES

July 19-20, 2006 Board meeting

Thank you to Boardmember Ishida for hosting our July meeting. SNC would also like to thank the Visalia Visitors Bureau and the Sequoia Riverlands Trust for the wonderful tour and reception.



July was Record Breaking Heat!